



USS *Constitution* – Sails & Sailing

22 July 1798

USS *Constitution* sailed from Boston on her 1st voyage
The ship's first suit of sails were made from flax (linen)

1817

USS *Constitution* sail plan by Charles Ware delineated 36 individual sails;
if studding sails were added to the main topgallant and royal
yards (mirroring the fore topgallant & royal studdingsails), the sail plan
then = up to 47 sails – see list at the end of this report



After 1817 sail plan of USS *Constitution* – US Navy photo

Fall, 1881

USS *Constitution* sailed under her own power for the last time in her
active career



Only known photo of *Constitution* under sail, summer, 1881, Hampton Roads, VA – US Navy photo

1931-34

USS *Constitution* traveled around the United States' 3 coasts on her "National Cruise"; although towed by the mine sweeper USS *Grebe*, *Constitution* was outfitted with a full suit of canvas sails and they were set during the cruise for pier-side demonstrations



Constitution with fore topsail set, San Francisco, February, 1933 – US Navy photo

21 July 1997

USS *Constitution*, outfitted with 6 Oceanus^{TM1} synthetic canvas sails – 2 jibs, 3 topsails, & spanker – sailed under her own power for 1 hour off the coast of Marblehead, MA in honor of her 200th anniversary



USS *Constitution*, 12noon, 21 July 1997, sailing off Marblehead, MA – US Navy photo

2012

USS *Constitution* has 11 OceanusTM sails available to be "bent" onto her yards – 2 jibs, 3 topsails, 3 topgallant sails, 1 main topmast staysail, 1 mizzen topmast staysail, & 1 spanker

¹ "OceanusTM" is a polyester synthetic cloth developed by North Cloth/North Sails for square-rigged sailing vessels. For more information, see www.northcloth.northsails.com/Product/OceanusCloth/tabid/579/Default.aspx - accessed 16 April 2012.

USS CONSTITUTION'S FULL SAIL COMPLEMENT

Name of Sails by Mast

Number of Sails on Each Mast

BOW

Flying Jib
Jib

Fore Topmast Staysail
Fore Topgallant Staysail

4 total

FORE MAST

Fore Sail (Course)
Fore Topsail
Fore Topgallant
Fore Royal
Fore Skysail

5 total

Fore Sail Studding Sails (2)
Fore Topsail Studding Sails (2)
Fore Topgallant Studding Sails (2)
Fore Royal Studding Sails (2)

8 total

MAIN MAST

Main Topmast Staysail
Middle Staysail
Main Topgallant Staysail
Main Royal Staysail

4 total

Main Sail (Course)
Main Topsail
Main Topgallant
Main Royal
Main Skysail

5 total

Main Sail Studding Sails - Possibly (2?)
Main Topsail Studding Sails (2)
Main Topgallant Studding Sails (2)
Main Royal Studding Sails (2)

6 or 8 total

MIZZEN MAST

Mizzen Staysail
Mizzen Topgallant Staysail
Mizzen Royal Staysail

3 total

Mizzen Topsail
Mizzen Topgallant
Mizzen Royal
Mizzen Skysail

4 total

Mizzen Topgallant Studding Sails (2)
Mizzen Royal Studding Sails (2)

4 total

SNOW MAST

Spanker (Driver)
Ringtail
Mizzen Gaff (Top) Sail

3 total

TOTAL # OF SAILS ON ALL MASTS

46 or 48

(More than 1 acre of canvas)

Naval History and Heritage Command Detachment Boston
Up-dated, April, 2012